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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR.

THE discovery announced in the foregoing notice by Mr. Norris is an unexpected and interesting accession to our knowledge of the Palæography and ancient history of India. There can be no doubt of the essential identity of monuments preserved through many centuries, by being inscribed on columns, or on rocks, in the most various and distant parts of the country; at Delhi, at Allahabad, in Behar, Cuttack, and Guzerat, and finally, in Afghanistan; originating with the same prince, and composed in the same language, with no other varieties than such as might be expected from difference of situation and defects of workmanship; curiously diversified, however, in the last instance, the case now under contemplation, by the use of a totally different alphabet, one written from right to left instead of from left to right, as in all the other inscriptions in India Proper, and corroborating the cotemporary currency of two sets of characters in the districts on the north-west frontier, of which we have had examples in the coins of Eukratides and Agathokles.

The concurrence of general purport which associates the inscription at Kapur-di-Giri with those of Dhauli and Girnar, as well as the light which they reflect upon the internal condition of India, and its relations with the neighbouring states, particularly with the Greek princes whose names are specified, will come most conveniently to be considered when the whole of the newly decyphered record shall have been prepared for the press. At present, it will be sufficient to offer a few observations on that portion which is now published, and which corresponds with the seventh Tablet of the Girnar and Dhauli inscriptions, as decyphered and translated by the late Mr. James Prinsep, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, for March, 1838.

The inscription opens with the phrase which introduces all the rest, whether on columns or on rocks, *Devānāmpriyo*, "the beloved of the Gods;" differing however from the rest in making the second member *Priyo* instead of *Piyo*, corresponding in this and other examples of the use of compound consonants more nearly with correct Sanskrit than with any of its Prakrit modifications. The termination of the singular nominative masculine in *o*, before a following hard consonant, is, however, the usual Prakrit inflexion.

The name of the king is next given *Priyāsi*, but as in every other inscription it occurs *Piyadasi*, and as the former would bear no known

signification, while the latter is evidently the same as the Sanskrit *Priyadarśi*, "the kind or pleasant-looking," we cannot hesitate to regard *Priyāśi* as a blunder of the workman who cut the letters in the rock. Who *Priyadarśi* was seems to be still open to doubt, notwithstanding his supposed identity with *Asoka*. This identification still rests upon a solitary passage in a rare manuscript of an almost unknown Buddhist work, the *Dīpawanso*, of which a copy brought to Ceylon from Siam, was procured by the late distinguished Pali scholar, Mr. Turnour. In that passage it is stated, that the inauguration of a prince named *Piyadasano* took place in the two hundred and eighteenth year after the disappearance of *Sākya*, and that he was the son of *Bindusara*, and the grandson, or as the unamended original has it, the grandson of the grandson of *Chandragupta*. The date and descent of *Piyadasana* sort well enough, it is true, with those ascribed to *Asoka*, in both Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions, and the circumstances of *Asoka's* conversion to Buddhism, the great zeal said to have been manifested by him in the extension of that faith, and his erection of innumerable pillars and temples, at least according to the chronicles of the Buddhists, would not be incompatible with the tenor of the edicts decyphered, and the number of places in which they are found. At the same time, it is rather inexplicable why the name *Asoka*, an appellation much better known than that of *Priyadasana*, should never once occur. There are also chronological inconsistencies between the probable date of a grandson of *Chandragupta* and of *Antiochus the Great*, who is named in the inscription, and must have been either anterior to, or cotemporary with the author of the edicts. We need not however dwell upon these difficulties at present.

The title *Rajo* corresponds with the reading of the *Girnar Tablet*, whilst the inscriptions of *Dolhi* and *Cuttack* have *Lāja*, a mere vernacular variation. In *savatra ichhati*, "everywhere desires," the first word is nearer to the correct Sanskrit form *sarvatra* than the *savata* of *Girnar*. Mr. Norris has had access to different transcripts of the latter, to a fac-simile on calico belonging to the Society; a copy taken by Captain Postans, in the possession of Mr. H. T. Prinsep; another of an earlier period belonging to Mr. James Prinsep, and the copy printed in the *Journal* with corrections made by Mr. J. Prinsep, but of which the publication was prevented by his lamented death. A copy also taken by Captain Jacob and Mr. Westergaard, a distinguished traveller and Sanskrit scholar, has been published in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of our Society*, for April, 1843. No material deviations from the copy printed in the *Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society*, by Mr. J. Prinsep, occur, but occasional varieties are met with; one of these was

ivati, as first read in the Girnar Tablet, but Mr. Prinsep corrected this to *ichhati*, and Mr. Westergaard gives the same reading. Their accuracy is confirmed by the Kapur-di-Giri inscription, in which the word is clearly *ichhati*, "he, the king, wishes or wills."

The words which are next given, as *Sava pāshanda vaseyu*, translated by Mr. Prinsep "all unbelievers may be inclined to, or brought to," cannot be quite so readily recognised. The Girnar Tablet has *save*, which would more accurately represent the Prākṛit plural of *sava*, "all." The mark denoting *e* is however easily obliterated, and the reading here may also be *save*. The use of what appears to be the cerebral sibilant in *pāshanda* is correct Sanskrit, whilst the substitution of the dental *s* in the Girnar version, is neither Sanskrit nor regular Prākṛit; all want however a termination here to denote whether the word *pashanda* be singular or plural. The chief difficulty however lies in the term *vaseyu*. It is clearly enough *vaseyu* in the Girnar Tablet; it is indistinct in the Dhauli inscription, and rather questionable in that of Kapur-di-Giri. Even, however, if the accuracy of the form be admitted the signification remains uncertain. Mr. Prinsep's Pandit supposed it to represent the third person plural of the potential mood of *vaś*, "to wish," or more usually, "to bring under subjection." This verb is written with the palatal sibilant, which is a letter of the Kapur-di-Giri alphabet also, yet the sibilant here employed is the dental. The Sanskrit form would also be *vaśyu*, not *vaseyu*, and the inscriptions usually conform to Sanskrit in the verbal inflexions which they contain. If it be part of a verb, therefore, it must be derived from the verb *vas*, with a dental sibilant, meaning "to dwell or inhabit," and the sentence will be, "may all the unbelievers abide." The following words, however, scarcely admit of this interpretation.

These are, according to the three several inscriptions, *save te, ti save paga*, and *save ite*; they are all doubtful; the second is unmeaning; the other two may be intended for *te save*, "they all," but they would then seem to be superfluous.

We have next, severally, *sayamancha bhāvasuddhincha*, *sachhaman bhāvasuddhicha*, and *sayaman bhavasuddhicha*. Mr. Prinsep's translation, including what precedes, is, "The king desires that all unbelievers may be brought to repentance and peace of mind;" but *sayaman*, "with moral merit," would not be a substantive but an adjective, or an adverb, and *bhāvasuddhi* is purity of nature rather than peace of mind. The first may possibly be intended for *sanyama*, which means moral control; but the nouns could scarcely be objectives governed by the intransitive verb *vasa*, "to abide," any more than by *vaś*, "to subdue."

In the repetition of the verb *ichhati*, "wishes," as it occurs in the Girnar Tablet, Mr. Prinsep had no other singular nominative for it than *Raja*, and he renders it accordingly "He is anxious." The present inscription furnishes a somewhat different reading, concurring apparently with that of the Dhauli rock, and gives the verb in the plural, *ichhanti*, "they wish," as if governed by *save te*, "they all," that is, all the *Pāśandās*. This verb again may govern the nouns which precede it in the accusative case, although the second term has the sign of the case and is written *bhūvasuddhin*, in the Girnar Tablet only.

The Kapur-di-Giri inscription agrees tolerably well in what follows with that at Girnar, substituting *cha*, "and," for *tu*, "but," as, *Jano cha uchdvacha chhando uchdvacha rago*. The Dhauli inscription has *Munisa* for *Jano*, a possible corruption for *manushya*, Sanskrit, "man," and the same therefore with *jano*, "man, or mankind." Mr. Prinsep translates the terms, "every diversity of opinion and every diversity of passion," a rendering which cannot be acquiesced in. As far as the words may be regarded as correctly decyphered, they would seem to express a general remark: "men or mankind are of various (high and low) wills—of various (high and low) passions," rather than a desire that they should be all of one way of thinking.

Te savam are the next words in all three. The Girnar Tablet has next *vakāsanti*; the other two have only *va*. In some of the transcripts of the former the word is *vakāsati*; but if the nominative be *te*, "they," the latter, which is in the singular, must be incorrect. There is no necessity to impute a defect to the other two inscriptions, if we suppose *va* to be properly *vā*, "or," the use of which obviates any occasion for the actual reiteration of the verb *kāsanti*, as it occurs in the Girnar Tablet.

We have next in the Girnar Tablet *ekadeśam cha kāsanti* (or *vakasata* or *vakasati*), in the Dhauli inscription *ekadusa chati*, and in that of Kapur-di-Giri, *ekadeśam va pi kāshanti*. The Dhauli inscription is defective; the two others nearly agree. Mr. Prinsep's translation, in continuance of the preceding and immediately succeeding sentences, is, "he is anxious that every diversity of opinion," &c., "may shine forth blended into one system, and be conspicuous, in every undistinguishing charity," this translation depending on the meaning of the verb *kās*, "to shine." But this version takes no notice of the contrast presented by *savam*, "all," and *ekadeśam*, "a part;" and it is not at all certain what the verb should be. *Kās*, and *kās* with a long vowel and a final palatal or dental sibilant, have, it is true, one of their meanings, "to shine;" yet this is in a literal sense, and they

could never be the equivalents of "being conspicuous." In the present inscription also the verb is written with a short vowel, and the cerebral sibilant, as *kash*; and *kash* in Sanskrit means "to kill." It may also fitly represent the Sanskrit *krish*, or *kars*, "to draw or attract." The translation suggested to Mr. Prinsep by his Pundit cannot therefore be relied on.

The present inscription supplies a necessary correction of the word that follows. The Girnar Tablet was read by Mr. Prinsep *visule*, with the remark that the second syllable was doubtful. The Dhauli reading is *vidala*, which did not tend to clear up the perplexity. In Mr. Westergaard's copy of the former the word is *vipule*, and this is now established by the Kapur-di-Giri inscription. The whole phrase in the latter is *vipule pi cha dane*; in the former tablet it is *vipule tu pi dane*, in which *pi* for *api*, "indeed," seems to be transposed. In Mr. Prinsep's translation these words were connected with the preceding, as in the passage already cited, "in every undistinguishing charity;" but whether we read *cha* or *tu*, "and" or "but," the particle separates the sentences, and detaches "gift" from any government of the verb *kāsanti*, even if such connexion were syntactically accurate, which it is not. We must understand *dane*, therefore, as standing alone, being in fact the ablative absolute, and render the phrase in a sense which admits of no question, "but great gifts being given," or "where there is great munificence:" this will also connect well enough with what follows, "he of whom there is not moral restraint and purity of disposition," *yasa nāsti sayama bhavasuddhi*, which is the reading of both the Girnar and Kapur-di-Giri rocks. The Dhauli inscription is evidently incorrect, but in using *nat̥hi* in place of *nāsti*, it only substitutes the Prākṛit form of the verb for the regular Sanskrit which is employed by both the others.

In the Girnar inscription we have next *tiva*, or *tāva*; the former is unmeaning, the latter might be intended for *tāvat*, "so far," "inasmuch as;" the Dhauli inscription has in place of it *cha*, "and." There is no word in this place in the Kapur-di-Giri inscription; the sense seems to require some term that might be the correlative of *yasa*, "whoso," as *tasa*, "of him." There is a blank in the following part of the Dhauli inscription which the other two agree in occupying with *katam-jn'atā*, or *kita-jnata*; both intended, no doubt, for the Sanskrit *kṛitajnatā*, "gratitude," not as the Pundit proposed to Mr. Prinsep, "supreme wisdom." The whole of the translation given in the Journal is here evidently very far wide of the truth, although it may be admitted that it is not easy to suggest a better, for all the rest of the original presents in either of the two most perfect inscriptions, a pas-

sage which cannot be satisfactorily interpreted, or even read with any degree of confidence.

The syllables that complete the portion of the inscription under review are in the Girnar version *vadādha-bhatita* (or *vadavabhatita*), *vanivā-bādham* (or *che-ni-cha-dhanām*), for all which we have at Dhauli but *cha-niche bādham*. The Kapur-di-Giri inscription conforms more nearly to the first, and has *niva-bhatita-niche-pādham*, a combination equally perplexing. We have first to determine how these syllables shall be divided into words, and then what the words signify, but I must confess myself unable to fulfil the first part of the condition, and as I cannot propose any satisfactory words, of course I suggest any interpretation as mere matter of conjecture. It may be thought that, as they are probably connected with *kṛta jñatā*, "gratitude," they may import that the acknowledgment of munificence will overlook want of moral desert, even in the base, *nicha* signifying "low," or "vile." The last word in the Kapur-di-Giri inscription, *pādham*, may be the equivalent of the Sanskrit *prathama*, "first;" or it may be intended for *prashtham*, "asked." The former would apparently lead naturally into the next or eighth portion of the inscription, which begins, according to Mr. Prinsep, "in ancient times," and not as usual, with *Devanam piyo*. It seems not improbable that the sentence does not terminate in this portion, and that either something is wanting, or that it leads into the next; at any rate, it is quite impossible that the concluding sentences of the seventh Girnar Tablet should admit of the translation of the Journal: "Unto no one can be repentance and peace of mind until he hath attained supreme knowledge, perfect faith, which surmounteth all obstacles, and perpetual assent." Mr. Prinsep states his dependence upon his Pundit for the interpretation of the documents, and although Kamala Kānta, by whom he was assisted, was a man of great learning and ability, yet the inherent difficulties of the task were more than he could overcome, and he was obliged to make up by ingenious conjecture for the deficiency of his knowledge and the imperfections of his text.

Although I cannot pretend to offer a translation of this part of Priyadarśi's proclamations which shall not be as liable to exception as that of my old and esteemed acquaintance Kamala Kānta, who is no longer living to vindicate his own work, or retaliate upon mine, yet it may be convenient to put together the results intimated as possible or probable in the foregoing remarks, if it were only to render them more amenable to criticism. I venture, therefore, to suggest the following as something nearer to the purport of the original than the former translation.

"The beloved of the gods, the Raja Priyadarsi, desires that all unbelievers may everywhere dwell (unmolested), as they also wish for moral restraint and purity of disposition. For men are of various purposes and various desires, and they do injury to all or only to a part. Although, however, there should not be moral restraint or purity of disposition in any one, yet wherever there is great liberality (or charity), gratitude will acknowledge merit even in those who were before that reputed vile."

Whatever may be thought of the exact rendering of this part of the inscription, it seems very likely that the Raja intended by it to recommend his own example to his subjects of every denomination in every part of India, and to encourage them to imitate him in the construction of works of public ornament or utility, and in the distribution of charitable gifts.
